

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHEC IMMEDIATE 3120
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 7765

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, US, FR, MNUC, TECH
SUBJECT: REPROCESSING - NYE VISIT AND MEETING AT MFA

SUMMARY: US AND GOP OFFICIALS HAD EXTENSIVE AND AMICABLE DISCUSSION OF NON-PROLIFERATION MATTERS AT MFA ON JULY 30. NYE REVIEWED PRESIDENT'S NON-PROLIFERATION POLICIES, INFCEP PROPOSALS AND HIGHLIGHTED OUR CONCERNS ABOUT REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY. HE EMPHASIZED OUR HOPE THAT MILITARY GOVERNMENT WILL NOT FORECLOSE ANY OPTIONS FOR SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO REPROCESSING PLANT.

SECRETARY GENERAL SHAHI REVIEWED HISTORY OF PAK NON-PROLIFERATION EFFORTS AND SAID CANCELLATION OR INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF PURCHASE WILL MEAN GRAVE LOSS OF FACE FOR PAKISTAN IN THE THIRD WORLD, WITH CONSEQUENT SERIOUS DOMESTIC POLITICAL RESULTS. NYE ASKED THAT GOP NOT PUSH THE FRENCH TO COMPLETE DELIVERIES BEFORE NEW PAK GOVERNMENT INSTALLED.

SHAHI NOTED ISSUE WAS "POLITICAL DYNAMITE" AND REITERATED PAK POSITION THAT INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL NOT TOUCH REPROCESSING QUESTION. ZIA BELIEVES IF HE TAKES ANY ACTION

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ON REPROCESSING HE WOULD BE POLITICALLY DISCREDITED AND PURCHASE WOULD BECOME CONTENTIOUS CAMPAIGN ISSUE. SHAHI SAID HE WOULD REPORT OUR CONCERNS TO MILITARY COUNCIL, AND HE HOPED WE COULD DELAY IMPOSITION OF SYMINGTON SANCTIONS.

ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT ACHIEVE BREAKTHROUGH ON REPROCESSING

ISSUE - AND DID NOT THINK WE WOULD - MEETING WAS HELD IN OPEN ATMOSPHERE, AND IT IS EVIDENT BOTH SIDES WANT TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE REPROCESSING QUANDARY. GOP TEAM DID NOT SUMMARILY REJECT OUR SUGGESTIONS ON DE FACTO DELAY OF FURTHER TRANSFERS AND WILL REFER DECISION TO MILITARY COUNCIL. OUR APPROACH MIGHT CONVINCE COUNCIL IT IS IN ITS INTEREST TO AVOID PUTTING HEAVY PRESSURE ON THE FRENCH TO CONTINUE TRANSFERS. NYE'S PRESENTATION MAY ALSO HAVE AROUSED INTEREST IN POSSIBILITIES OF ALTERNATIVES TO REPROCESSING PLANT. DILEMMA WE AND PAKS FACE IS TO FORESTALL CONFRONTATION THAT WOULD FORECLOSE POSSIBILITY OF A FULL DIALOGUE WITH A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY

1. DURING TWO AND A HALF HOUR MEETING AT MFA JULY 30, AMERICAN AND GOP OFFICIALS HAD CANDID, EXTENSIVE AND AMICABLE DISCUSSION OF NON-PROLIFERATION MATTERS, FOCUSING ON INTERNATIONAL FUEL CYCLE EVALUATION PROGRAM (INFCEP) AND REPROCESSING PLANT PURCHASE. US SIDE WAS LED BY JOSEPH NYE AND PAKISTANI SIDE BY SECRETARY GENERAL AGHA SHAHI.

2. NYE OPENED MEETING WITH THE COMMENT WE HOPED TO HAVE A FRANK DISCUSSION WITH A MINIMUM OF PUBLICITY. HE THEN REVIEWED PRESIDENT'S NON-PROLIFERATION CONCERNS AND OUR GENERAL GLOBAL NUCLEAR POLICY, HIGHLIGHTING THE NEED TO SECRET

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REDUCE THE IMPORTANCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WHILE SUPPORTING NUCLEAR ENERGY. NYE ALSO OUTLINED PROPOSALS FOR INFCEP AND NOTED IT IS AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP A NEW INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS, COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY, WHICH DOES NOT PREJUDGE THE OUTCOME. NYE GAVE PAKISTANI SIDE THE LATEST REVISION OF INFCEP PAPER, AND STATED IT WAS AD REFERENDUM TO THE GOVERNMENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE RECENT PARIS MEETINGS. HE REITERATED OUR INVITATION FOR PAKISTAN TO PARTICIPATE.

3. NYE SAID THAT OUR SPECIFIC OBJECTIONS TO THE REPROCESSING PLANT ARE NOT DIRECTED ONLY AT PAKISTAN, BUT REFLECT A BROADER CONCERN FOR NON-PROLIFERATION GOALS. HE POINTED OUT THAT PUREX REPROCESSING MAY BECOME OBSOLESCENT AFTER INFCEP AND THAT RECYCLE IS OF QUESTIONABLE ECONOMIC VALUE, EVEN FOR THE U.S. WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF REACTORS. NYE ALSO NOTED THE HIGH COST TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP IF PAKISTAN GOES AHEAD WITH THE PURCHASE. HE REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF NUCLEAR ENERGY COOPERATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR PENDING LEGISLATION, AS WELL AS CONTINUING ECONOMIC AID. HE POINTED TO THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT AND FORESTALLED ANY EXPECTATION THAT PRESIDENTIAL WAIVER PROVISION COULD BE INVOKED. NYE EMPHASIZED OUR

HOPE THAT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WOULD ACT IN SUCH A WAY
AS TO LEAVE ITS SUCCESSOR WITH THE OPTION TO CONSIDER
ALTERNATIVES TO THE REPROCESSING PLANT.

4. AGHA SHAHI RESPONDED BY NOTING THE GOP RESPECTS AND
ADMIRE THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S GLOBAL NON-PROLIFERATION
CONCERNS. HE THEN TRACED WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS THE
"LONG HISTORY" OF PAKISTANI CONCERNS ABOUT NON-PROLIFERATION
BEGINNING WITH A WARNING TO THE UN IN 1966 OF INDIA'S
INTENTIONS. HE ADDED THAT IF THE USG HAD RAISED THE
REPROCESSING SALE EVEN SIX MONTHS EARLIER THAN WE DID,
IT COULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE FOR THE GOP TO CANCEL THE
PURCHASE. HE COMPLAINED THAT THE U.S. HAD NOT SUPPORTED
PAKISTANI INITIATIVES FOR A SOUTH ASIA NUCLEAR FREE ZONE
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AND ENHANCED SECURITY COUNCIL GUARANTEES FOR NON-NUCLEAR
WEAPONS STATES.

5. SHAHI WENT ON TO SAY THAT THIRD WORLD RESPECT AND
SUPPORT ARE ESSENTIAL TO PAKISTAN AND ITS SURVIVAL.
CANCELLATION WILL MEAN A GRAVE LOSS OF FACE. THEREFORE,
THE GOP IS FACED WITH EITHER A CONFRONTATION WITH THE US
OR GRAVE DAMAGE TO ITS INTERNATIONAL STATUS WITH SERIOUS
DOMESTIC POLITICAL RESULTS. SINCE REPROCESSING IS SUCH
A SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUE, THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT
CANNOT POSTPONE THE PURCHASE.

6. NYE COMPLIMENTED SHAHI ON PAKISTAN'S PRESCIENCE IN
THE NON-PROLIFERATION FIELD, AND INDICATED OUR WILLINGNESS
TO STUDY NUCLEAR FREE ZONE AND SECURITY COUNCIL GUARANTEE
PROPOSALS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE TO LOOK AT HOW WE HANDLE THE
IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT. HE SUGGESTED
THAT, THROUGH ELECTIONS, THE GOP NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE
ANY CHANGE IN POLICY, BUT ALSO NOT PUSH THE FRENCH TO GO
AHEAD. THIS WOULD ENTAIL A DE FACTO DELAY - A BUREAUCRATIC
SOLUTION TO THE SHORT-TERM PROBLEM.

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7. THE SECRETARY GENERAL REPLIED THAT THE PLANT WAS "POLITICAL DYNAMITE" AND THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT HAS NO CHOICE. DOMESTIC POLITICAL OPINION IS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO ANY DELAY AND ANY HINT OF POSTPONEMENT WOULD BECOME A CAMPAIGN ISSUE IN THE HANDS OF MR. BHUTTO WHO IS VERY WELL INFORMED AND WOULD KNOW IMMEDIATELY IF ANY DELAYS WERE TO TAKE PLACE. WHEN THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT WE ARE NOT SUGGESTING ANY INITIATIVE BY THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, BUT ONLY SUGGESTING THAT THE GOP REFRAIN FROM PUTTING PRESSURE ON PARIS, SHAHI REPLIED HE WOULD REPORT OUR CONCERNS FULLY TO GENERAL ZIA AND THE MILITARY COUNCIL.

8. NYE SAID THAT THE MILITARY COUNCIL IS FACED WITH A DECISION TO PERMIT (BY INACTION) A TWO MONTH DE FACTO DELAY OR TO FORECLOSE VARIOUS OPTIONS FOR COOPERATION, INCLUDING ECONOMIC AID AND PERHAPS MILITARY SALES, WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE ASKED WHICH WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. SHAHI RESPONDED THAT ZIA KNOWS HE WOULD BE POLITICALLY DISCREDITED IF HE TOUCHED THIS ISSUE.

9. NYE SAID THAT EVEN IF WE CANNOT POINT TO A DELAY BY PAKISTAN IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO BE ABLE TO TELL
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CONGRESS, QUIETLY AND WITHOUT PUBLICITY, THAT THE FRENCH HAVE SAID THAT TRANSFERS HAVE NOT YET BEEN COMPLETED AND THERE IS A DE FACTO DELAY. YET THE FRENCH CAN DO THIS ONLY IF THERE IS NO PRESSURE FROM PAKISTAN. SHAHI REITERATED THAT THE SUBJECT WAS POLITICAL DYNAMITE AND IF THERE IS NO WAY FOR THE USG TO AVOID IMPOSING THE SYMINGTON SANCTIONS, "WE WILL PUT OUR HEAD ON THE BLOCK." HE ASKED, HOWEVER, IF WE COULD NOT FOR OUR PART FIND SOME WAY TO DELAY IMPOSITION OF THE SANCTIONS DURING THIS INTERIM PERIOD. SHAHI REAFFIRMED THAT THE WOULD REPORT OUR CONCERNS TO ZIA AND THE COUNCIL.

10. NYE ASKED IF THE GOP SIDE COULD GIVE US A READING ON THE STATUS OF THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY. MUNIR KHAN, PAKISTAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN, REPLIED THAT ALL IMPORTANT TECHNOLOGY FOR THE PLANT HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED BY JULY, 1974. HE SAID THAT SOME EQUIPMENT REMAINS TO BE TRANSFERRED, HOWEVER, BUT EVADED A RESPONSE ON TIMING OF NEXT DELIVERIES.

1. THE AMBASSADOR ADDED, AT THE END OF THE DISCUSSION, THAT HE WANTED TO NOTE FOR THE RECORD THAT OUR DESIRE TO HAVE CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN CONTINUES, AND IT REMAINS OUR POLICY TO SUPPORT PAKISLMN'S INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE OUR COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS, BUT WE MUST FIND A WAY OUT OF THE REPROCESSING DILEMMA.

12. ADDITIONAL FOREIGN SECRETARY SHAHNAWAZ HOSTED LUNCH FOR NEGOTIATING TEAMS AT MFA FOLLING THE TALKS.

13. COMMENT: WE DID NOT ACHIEVE ANY BREAKTHROUGH ON THE REPROCESSING SALE, BUT HAD NOT EXPECTED TO. THE MEETING
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CONFIRMED OUR VIEW THAT THE PLANT IS NO LONGER AN ECONOMIC OR TECHNICAL ISSUE FOR THE GOP, RATHER IT IS SEEN AS FUNDAMENTALLY A POLITICAL QUESTION, INVOLVING FACE, NATIONAL PRIDE AND THE BONA FIDES OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. SHAHI REAFFIRMED THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO REMAIN PRISTINE IN MATTERS POLITICAL AND REPEATED ITS FEAR OF BEING TAINTED BY THE REPROCESSING ISSUE. IT WAS APPARENT THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION THAT THE PAKISTANI SIDE WAS TORN BETWEEN ITS FEAR OF SAYING ANYTHING FOR THE RECORD THAT WOULD SHOW ANY LACK OF RESOLVE ON THE REPROCESSING ISSUE, AND ITS DESIRE TO AVOID A SITUATION THAT WOULD HARM ITS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.

14. AS INDICATED BY MUNIR KHAN'S REPLY, WE DO NOT EXPECT THE GOP TO ANSWER DEFINITELY OUR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF TRANSFERS, ESPECIALLY WHEN SHIPMENTS ARE SCHEDULED. SEPTTEL GIVES INFO ON FURTHER DELAYS EXPECTED IN SHIPMENT OF CHOPPING MACHINE.

15. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, THE MEETING WAS HELD IN A FRIENDLY AND OPEN ATMOSPHERE. BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION AND FIND A WAY OUT OF THE REPROCESSING QUANDRY. WE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THIS ISSUE BECAME SO POLITICALLY CONTENTIOUS, TO HAVE IN-DEPTH DISCUSSIONS WITH RANKING GOP OFFICIALS ON REPROCESSING AND OUR GENERAL NON-PROLIFERA-

TION CONCERNS. THIS DIALOGUE WAS USEFUL IN THAT IT CLEARLY
DELINEATED THE POSITIONS OF BOTH SIDES.

16. ALSO, THE GOP TEAM DID NOT SUMMARILY REJECT OUR
SUGGESTIONS ON DE FACTO DELAY OF FURTHER TRNASFERS; SHAHI
DID REPEAT THAT OUR CONCERNS WOULD BE REPORTED IN FULL
TO ZIA AND THE MILITARY COUNCIL WILL MAKE THE FINAL
DECISION. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE GOP WILL COME BACK TO
US WITH A PRIVATE STATEMENT IT HAS AGREED TO A DE FACTO
POSTPONEMENT OF FURTHER TRANSFERS. HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY
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EXISTS THAT OUR APPROACH MIGHT CONVINCE THE MILITARY COUNCIL
IT IS IN ITS INTEREST TO AVOID PUTTING HEAVY PRESSUE ON
THE FRENCH TO CONTINUE TRANSFERS DURING THE INTERIM
GOVERNMENT.

17. WE BELIEVE NYE'S PRESENTATION MAY HAVE ALSO AWAKENED
SOME INTEREST AMONG THESE SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE
POSSIBILITIES FOR ALTERNATIVES TO THE REPROCESSING PLANT.
THEIR DILEMMA, AND OURS, IS HOW TO FORESTALL A CONFRONTATION
OVER THE NEXT TWO MONTHS THAT WOULD FORECLOSE THE POSSIBILITY
OF OPENING A FULL DIALOGUE WITH AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT ON
THE BASIS OF THE IDEAS NYE PRESENTED.
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